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A REVISION OF AMERICAN POLICIES

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In every age and nation two conflicting forces are active in determining national policies. One of these is the national sentiment generated in the past, which in connection with social tradition tends to perpetuate old and often useless policies. The other force is the commercial needs upon which present national prosperity depends. In our national history both of these forces have been active and each in turn has been dominant.

During the period of the American Revolution, sentiment prevailed over interest, while in the period of constitutional development commercial interests were dominant. Both sentiment and interest played a part in the great Civil War, but interest was the chief motive and it in the end determined the course of events.

Today we are entering a new epoch in which interest and emotion again conflict. The national policies of the preceding century have evoked the emotions that at present are dictating our foreign policy. It is equally plain that a new group of commercial interests have arisen creating an opposing force as great if not greater than that which in our early history gave rise to the desire for a constitution. We should therefore contrast these two forces and see where their opposition lies and in what way the two can be adjusted without too great a break in the national policy.

American sentiments are in the main aggregated around five principles: the Monroe Doctrine, local independent states, Anglo-American unity, foreign complications and a paternal attitude on the part of the nation towards the smaller states to the south. These sentiments developed during the earlier epoch of isolation when commerce was internal. There were then no great interests to counteract in foreign affairs the sentimental opinions generated by our earlier history. When we expanded we did so by annexation and thus brought within the nation the various parts of the continent commercially valuable to us. In this way national and race homogeneity was preserved and those foreign complications avoided

which might easily have created trouble. A new commercial situation, however, has arisen, which demands the development of a foreign policy based on the same elements that up to the present time have created our internal demands and interests. Under the old condition our industries were in the main local. Wheat, meat, corn and cotton were our great products, and they could all be produced within our borders. The old theory of social progress assumed that national and race vitality could be found only to the north of the frost line, and that the nations to the south were bound to be defective and dependent. All this has changed in recent years through the increased control of disease and the spread of better industrial conditions to southern regions. The center of civilization at the present time is 15 degrees south of what it was a century ago. As good a civilization can now be maintained on the 25th degree of latitude as formerly on the 40th.

In addition to this, radical modifications in our diet have taken place by which southern foods have become important—so important that they are today as vital an element in our diet as are the older products of northern regions. Sugar, fruit, rice, bananas and other tropical plants have now become an essential element in our food supply and only through further development of these products can a low cost of living be restored. At least one-third of the national diet should be obtained from regions south of the 25th degree. This means that they must be obtained in regions beyond the present limits of the United States. The only way, therefore, to reduce the present cost of living is the utilization of this great region for the production of foods for which they are best fitted. It is no overestimate to say that if these changes were effected a reduction in the cost of living of 30 per cent could be made. This is important to eastern cities which can more readily obtain their food from southern regions than from the western states. It is also of importance in places where immigrants from southern Europe live. These races are used to a vegetable diet and will therefore more readily adjust themselves to southern foods than will older northern races.

These changes, therefore, mean the transference of industry from chilly New England to the sunny South and from the lakes on the north to the gulf on the south. The present advantages of the region from Philadelphia to Charleston are 20 per cent greater than those to the north, and a shift of population and industry must take

place which will bring the center of American civilization within this region.

Another element of importance in deciding future policies is the change in social morality now taking place. Formerly people limited their responsibilities to their family, their locality, their state or at most to their nation. They felt responsible for what took place in their own town as opposed to other towns; to their neighborhood as opposed to other parts of the city. They thought that crossing some artificial state line relieved them from responsibility for the people on the other side. This provincial tone is now disappearing. We are beginning to realize that we are as responsible for what takes place in the slums as for what takes place in our own families, for what takes place across the river as well as in our own ward or city. National responsibilities are correspondingly changed, for our moral interests lie quite as much in what is outside of the artificial limits of the United States as in what takes place within them.

Social responsibility goes with trade. We control the lives and morality of those who supply us goods or furnish us with service, and this responsibility is quite as great if the individuals who serve us live in a foreign land as if they are in parts of our own city or as members of our own family. It has been often asserted that trade follows the flag. It might be better said that moral responsibility follows commerce. There is no way of avoiding this larger responsibility except by narrowing our moral horizon and rendering less effective the principle of social service to all mankind.

Let me make clear the principle involved. In primitive communities each locality is industrially independent, creates its own supply of food and satisfies its own wants. This simple economy of our forefathers is disturbed by the introduction of larger industrial units. The laborer now loses his industrial independence; he must go where capital is and have his situation determined by its needs. The laborers in Philadelphia are not there because they desire it; they are there because they are dependent upon capital for employment, and the capital finds its location in Philadelphia. Whenever this disturbance takes place, the community becomes from that time responsible for the laborers' condition. They are where they are either to create a higher return on capital or to create lower prices for consumers. The capitalist and the consumer, therefore, become socially responsible as soon as they take labor from its

natural environment and put it in places where it satisfies the wants of the community at large.

Under these conditions it is shortsighted to assume that responsibility ceases at the crossing of political lines. The real question is, Have you as a result of your altered consumption or from your desire for a larger income forced laborers to move from their accustomed environment to surroundings where they serve your ends? If so, your responsibility is met only when the condition of the laborers is brought up to the normal level of the community.

In the copper region of Michigan, for example, many laborers have been aggregated to satisfy the wants of the nation and to secure profits to the owners of the mines. Neither mine owners nor the consumers of copper goods can disclaim responsibility for the evils existing in this region. They have created the conditions under which the laborer lives and must accept responsibility for the laborer's welfare. Our country and the world at large have many such problems. It means a moral responsibility on the part of any community or class that has disturbed the natural conditions under which laborers have existed by forcing them into a new environment where their independence is subordinated to the general good. Exploitation and degradation are the results of these changes, unless a moral awakening on the part of the community brings to the dislocated population a return to their earlier social independence.

The first question, therefore, to ask concerning the region to the south of the United States is, Have we dislocated their industries? Has Mexico been disturbed by the demands of foreign consumers or foreign capitalists? If this is so, then the various commercial or national groups creating this dislocation are responsible for the disorder, confusion and misery prevalent in Mexico. It is not constitutional rights that we should uphold. Rather should we see that the conditions on which an industrial civilization depends are realized in Mexico. These conditions may be divided into three groups: political rights, economic principles with the resulting social responsibility and social ideals that are a consequence of our civilization.

I shall not attempt to formulate our political rights nor the principles of constitutional government that have followed their application to national life. It is, however, important that the economic principles and the social emotions of our civilization should

be formulated so that we can see our responsibility and recognize what are the real motives prompting our action towards other classes or races. The economic principles are these:

1. The maintenance of order
2. The freedom of exchange
3. The education of the masses
4. The ownership of land
5. The security of capital
6. The sacredness of contracts
7. The prevention of industrial exploitation
8. A living wage

Each of these has been found essential to the prosperity of America, and can therefore be assumed to be the basis of our relations to any external industrial group. We must prevent exploitation; we must give a living wage; we must make capital secure; we must see that the masses in every community whose industrial relations we dominate maintain their industrial efficiency.

The social emotions arising from our civilization may be formulated as follows:

1. Brotherhood of man
2. Joy in mutual prosperity
3. Respect for manly labor
4. Love of intergroupal contact
5. Subordination of personal, group and national interest to the general good
6. Subordination of legal rights to social welfare
7. Pride in Anglo-American ideals and civilization
8. Self and group sacrifice for the benefit of backward races

These emotions have been growing through the past two centuries and must be taken into consideration in the settlement of foreign affairs. Group interest must be subordinated to social welfare, a keener love for our brother man must be evoked, respect for manly labor must be encouraged, and a pride in Anglo-American ideals and civilization must grow with the spread of our industrial institutions. Last but not least is the sacrifice which is demanded of us to help the backward races enter upon the civilization that we enjoy.

Political action must depend upon these economic principles or upon the social emotions that result from them. What we should insist upon in our dealings with neighboring states is not constitu-

tional government but the reality of an industrial civilization. The question is not whether the Mexican constitution harmonizes with ours, but whether Mexican industry conforms to the conditions of a higher civilization. Our feelings toward the Russian people, for example, should not be determined by the fact that they have an absolute monarchy, but by the violation of economic principles that the present government in Russia may favor, or by the suppression of the social emotions that have become the common heritage of mankind. Only on one or the other of these grounds have we the right to interfere in foreign affairs or to demand conformity on the part of other nations to the principles which our civilization has evoked. We should be proud not of our constitution but of our civilization. Our guide should be justice not liberty.

These newer ideas and standards profoundly modify our external relations. With those parts of the world in which our commercial interests are slight, we have little responsibility; but this responsibility increases as our trade and industry grow, and it becomes imperative when these interests are so dominant that regions with which we trade left to themselves would fail to maintain political and industrial stability. Our industrial relations with South America are slight and will always be so. No greater mistake can be made than to assume that the Panama Canal will make South America a part of our industrial system. We should view the Canal as a contribution to the general prosperity of the world in which we will gain not as we seize or maintain control of South America, but as we share in the general prosperity that comes to all through industrial gains. A broader policy should be adopted towards the South American states. They should be made responsible for their own stability, and for their own internal development. Our interest in them is no greater than in Africa or in Australia. We should take our hands off and allow that progress to take place which will come naturally through their internal development. This means the withdrawal of our assumed control, and the granting of complete independence on their part and also a complete responsibility for their own acts. They should be treated exactly as the Balkan States are now treated in Europe—as an independent unity that must struggle with and successfully overcome their own internal difficulties.

The situation is different when we consider our relations to Central America and Mexico. All of this region is an integral part of our

industrial system. We cannot prosper without their prosperity, and they can maintain neither industrial prosperity nor political stability without our aid. To have our policy under these conditions controlled by sentiment is a fatal mistake. We must either control or let disorder continue and if disorder continues not only will they suffer but we shall have corresponding losses due to the lower standard of life and higher cost of living thus imposed upon the American people.

Control may cost lives and may cost money but lives are now lost in far greater numbers than could be through any effective policy of control. The waste of wealth under present conditions also far exceeds any loss that we might undergo in establishing permanent industrial relations throughout this region. We cannot draw an imaginary line between them and us without moral degradation on the one part and commercial loss on the other.

This control if properly exercised would create stable industry, a redistribution of population into regions now fitted for full physical development, and a movement of our colored population to the south instead of to the north, with a resulting mitigation of difficulties with the negro race. It would also mean a great extension of the field of capital and enterprise, offering inducements for saving and personal development which would otherwise be absent. But more than all these, we should think of the social uplift which would come to all the tropical races through the improvement of their health and industry. There is no reason why this region for whose welfare we are socially responsible should not be made as prosperous and its population as virile as the northern races.

This creates new political problems since our expansions in the past have been over territory of like industrial qualities and filled with people of similar traits and character to those of the adjacent states. Such a union as we have had in the past would not be advantageous under the more complex conditions which an expanding commercial policy creates. There is, however, no reason why we should not have *adjunct* states for whose social conditions and industrial prosperity we are responsible without creating the difficulties which would arise if they were admitted to our union. We must conscientiously face these industrial problems, whether they relate to our recent immigrants, to the colored race, or to the races to our south. In the solution we could serve the world in as important a

way as we did in our early history by securing our independence and establishing our political unity.

The really difficult problem in this modification of our external policy relates to Mexico. We must, however, remember that Mexico is not an industrial unit, and that the real weakness in Mexico at the present time lies in the fact that the different sections are bound together only by weak sentimental ties. The economic interests of these sections are so different and the class interests are so intense that no political unity can be maintained in Mexico except as some sections dominate others or some classes control those differing from themselves. Each new conquest will be that of a class or a section and thus revive the evils that caused the present revolution. To think that under such circumstances a unity can be maintained in Mexico is to fly in the face of experience. Political independence cannot be upheld except through economic independence, and any region that is not economically self-sufficing must sooner or later become a component part of some larger unity that is economically independent.

The principles that I have enunciated apply not merely to the Mexican situation, but to the whole Anglo-American civilization. Both England and America have arrived at a point where old constitutional restraints have broken down and where new principles of common action must be developed. England has the same situation to face in regard to Ireland and to South Africa that we have in regard to Mexico. Our responsibilities are not diminished by the fact that Mexico is external to the territory of the United States, nor is English responsibility reduced on the plea that England is giving local self-government to various parts of the British Empire.

Ireland cannot become a political unit, because she is not an industrial unit. Belfast does not trade with Dublin, but with the outside world. Dublin in turn has its external trade independent of other parts of Ireland. This means that any decision interfering with the industrial prosperity of Belfast will not be felt in Dublin, and hence will not tend to create a reaction that will set it aside. Our western states may not be much interested in eastern prosperity, but eastern depression is sure to be felt in the western states and to produce in them a reaction in favor of conditions in the east that would give them prosperity. No such mutual conditions exist in Ireland. All that would hold such a unit together would be a weak

local sentiment which could not under any circumstances be powerful enough to prevent the aggressions of one locality against another. The same lack of common interests prevails in South America. Its mining industry creates abnormal conditions for the benefit of the world at large. We can not expect a dominant class in such a locality to respect the interests of other classes. The only method by which the balanced prosperity of these localities, groups and classes can be insured is by some outside control imposing upon the whole region the economic principles and social emotions that have developed in the larger Anglo-American world.

Our policy towards Mexico should be based on these principles. We should break up the Mexican state and put in its place natural units, the people of which have common industrial interests and who would therefore feel any burden that may be imposed on some one class. There must in addition be an abrogation of class privileges. There should also be a definite policy about public utilities. These are so influential that they cannot be controlled by the different localities. All this could be done without any break in our political precedents. It would, however, force a reconstruction of our economic ideals and a greater emphasis on our social emotions. Both these changes are much to be desired; if the Mexican situation leads us to a clearer perception of the economic and social principles on which our civilization depends, we shall not only be the gainers in our foreign policy but also in all our domestic relations.

Let me restate fundamentals to make my position clear. Economic interests should determine the extent of the region over which we exert effective control. In this whole region our responsibilities are the same whether a given portion be in or without our national union. We should not control regions like South America where our ties are sentimental. We should control Mexico even if sentiment on both sides of the national boundary is opposed. Social responsibility must dominate over regional feelings.

Two groups of sentiments are wholesome: the Anglo-American, which reflect our whole civilization, and those evoked by local interests. Class sentiments, regional sentiments, race sentiments, language sentiments and denominational sentiments are bad and should be displaced either by the broader sentiments of our civilization or by economic interests. To treat Mexico as a whole would be as fatal as to have treated the South as a unit at the close of the Civil

War. Had we done this an intolerable situation would have arisen only solved by another war. We want no southern sentiment, no eastern or western sentiment, no more than we want Irish, German or Jewish sentiment. Mexican sentiment is a bar to their progress and to ours. It should be faced and suppressed just as southern sentiment was fought and defeated.

Local political units should be economic and so demarked that people of similar interests can act together for common ends. No other sentiments except those generated by our whole civilization can be tolerated. That which goes beyond the locality should be broad enough and true enough to arouse all men. Interests are local; sentiments are universal. We should avoid the mistakes now committed by England in relation to Ireland and South Africa. Irish and South African sentiment is regional. Like southern sentiment or Mexican sentiment or the class sentiments that are now forming, they are against social welfare, and should be repressed. Only as they are blended into a larger unity that is not regional or class can our civilization expand and flourish. Both regions and classes must lose their emotional appeal in the march of events giving to localities their economic rights and to the whole world one religion, one future and one civilization. Away with all besides this goal in which political, economic and social interests unite into a harmonious whole and lift us above the strife of regional and race emotions.